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Family Seeks Court Order to Block All Saints Salutatorian Decision Ahead of Graduation

Alaine Lockart-Mollah and Eric Mollah allege All Saints ranked students before fourth-quarter Environmental Science grades were posted, causing irreparable harm, and seek preservation of records and a halt to further ranking actions.

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All Saints Cathedral School, St. Thomas USVI

ST. THOMAS – Ahead of the planned graduation ceremony for the All Saints Cathedral School on Thursday, June 4, the courts have received an application for a temporary restraining order to prevent what plaintiffs say would be the conferring of salutatorian status on the wrong student.

The civil complaint was filed in Superior Court on Tuesday afternoon by Alaine Lockart-Mollah and Eric Mollah, relatives of a graduating senior who they say is being unfairly deprived of her chance at salutatorian honors due to “manipulation and/or miscalculation of academic grades, weighted averages, credits, and class rankings.”

They accuse the school of failing to post the child’s fourth quarter Environmental Science grades until after the title of salutatorian was already decided. The child, according to the lawsuit, had previously “maintained academic performance to qualify her for salutatorian status under the school’s published and historically applied ranking methodology.”

Despite the missing grades, the complaint states, the school went ahead with determining class ranking “and announced it to Government House staff, in haste to have a valedictorian and salutatorian representing the school at the governor’s reception for those honors.” After the grades in question were posted, the school “altered, manipulated, recalculated, or improperly applied grading and ranking procedures in a manner inconsistent with academic policies.”

These alleged actions caused the child to be “hampered in her academic standing, to the degree where she will lose her proper academic placement and/or placement as salutatorian,” the lawsuit claims. Her grades for Environmental Science, the complaint alleges, were the only ones not entered on time. The school administration “failed to adequately investigate or remedy these irregularities and instead acted to shield responsible personnel from scrutiny.”

The request for an injunction comes because “absent judicial intervention, minor Plaintiff will suffer irreparable harm including loss of academic distinction, scholarship opportunities, reputational injury, emotional distress, and permanent alteration of educational records,” the lawsuit claims.

The complaint asks the court to order the preservation and production of all grading and ranking records, and prevent the school from further alteration of academic records or making any further announcement or related activity regarding class ranking. They allege negligence, breach of contract/implied covenant of good faith, and violation of due process and fundamental fairness on the part of the school and its administrators.

Named defendants include the school itself, Jimez Ashby as chair of the school’s board of trustees, Karla Sarauw, the Head of the school, and Jennifer Cannon, the child’s Environmental Studies teacher. There has been no response filed from any of these parties as of press time.